

1. Background

Lichfield District Council supports residents who have been victims of domestic abuse, hate crime, racial harassment, or other violence who either approach us as homeless, or are worried they may become homeless, as they no longer feel safe in their own home because of a continue threat of violence against them.

Victims of domestic abuse, hate crime, racial harassment, or other violence who leave their home/become homeless as a result are assessed as having [priority housing need](#). This is because it is no longer safe for them to remain in their home.

That said some people do not want to leave their home, and it may be assessed as being safe for them to remain, subject to additional security measures being implemented.

The council's safer home scheme works in partnership with Staffordshire Police's architectural crime specialist to determine whether and what security measures may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis. The council then utilises the government's homelessness prevention grant funding to deliver any recommended works.

2. What is the safer home scheme?

The purpose of the safer home scheme is to improve the security of people's homes following an incident(s) of domestic abuse, hate crime, racial harassment, or other violence, thereby reducing the chance individuals and families will become homeless as a result.

The safer home scheme can deliver additional security measures including, but not limited to:

- Change of locks.
- Fitting of heavy-duty doors.
- Fitting of new/additional locks to doors and windows.
- Fitting of fireproof letterboxes.
- Installation of camera doorbells.
- Outside cameras and security lighting.

3. Eligibility

All property types are eligible, including social rented, private rented, and privately owned/mortgaged properties. Tenants must gain approval from their landlord/housing association before any works are approved and carried out.

4. Procedure

Local partners including housing associations, police, Pathway etc, all refer customers to the scheme if they are concerned someone is threatened with homelessness because of domestic abuse, hate crime, racial harassment, or other violence.

Referrals are also made by housing options officers, homelessness and tenancy sustainment officers within the council.

The safer home scheme is not open for self-referrals by customers – a customer must have been identified to be at risk of homelessness to qualify.

As soon as a referral is received, the housing team will arrange for an assessment to be carried out in partnership with the Staffordshire Police architectural crime specialist.

This will indicate whether the scheme is appropriate and what security measures are recommended.

Based on the recommendations and approval from the homeowner/landlord, the housing team will then arrange for the recommended security measures to be installed in partnership with the appointed contractors.

For further information on the process followed by the team, see the process map and procedure detailed at **Appendix 1**.

5. Financial implications

The scheme, and any works delivered through the scheme, are free of charge to the customer, and are funded through the government's [homelessness prevention grant](#), in recognition that the works delivered can help to prevent homelessness.

6. Monitoring and review

Performance indicators are monitored as part of the housing services dataset including:

- Number of referrals.
- Number of works delivered.
- Value of works delivered.
- Number of successful homelessness preventions.
- Household make-up.
- Referral source.
- Length of time from referral to installation.

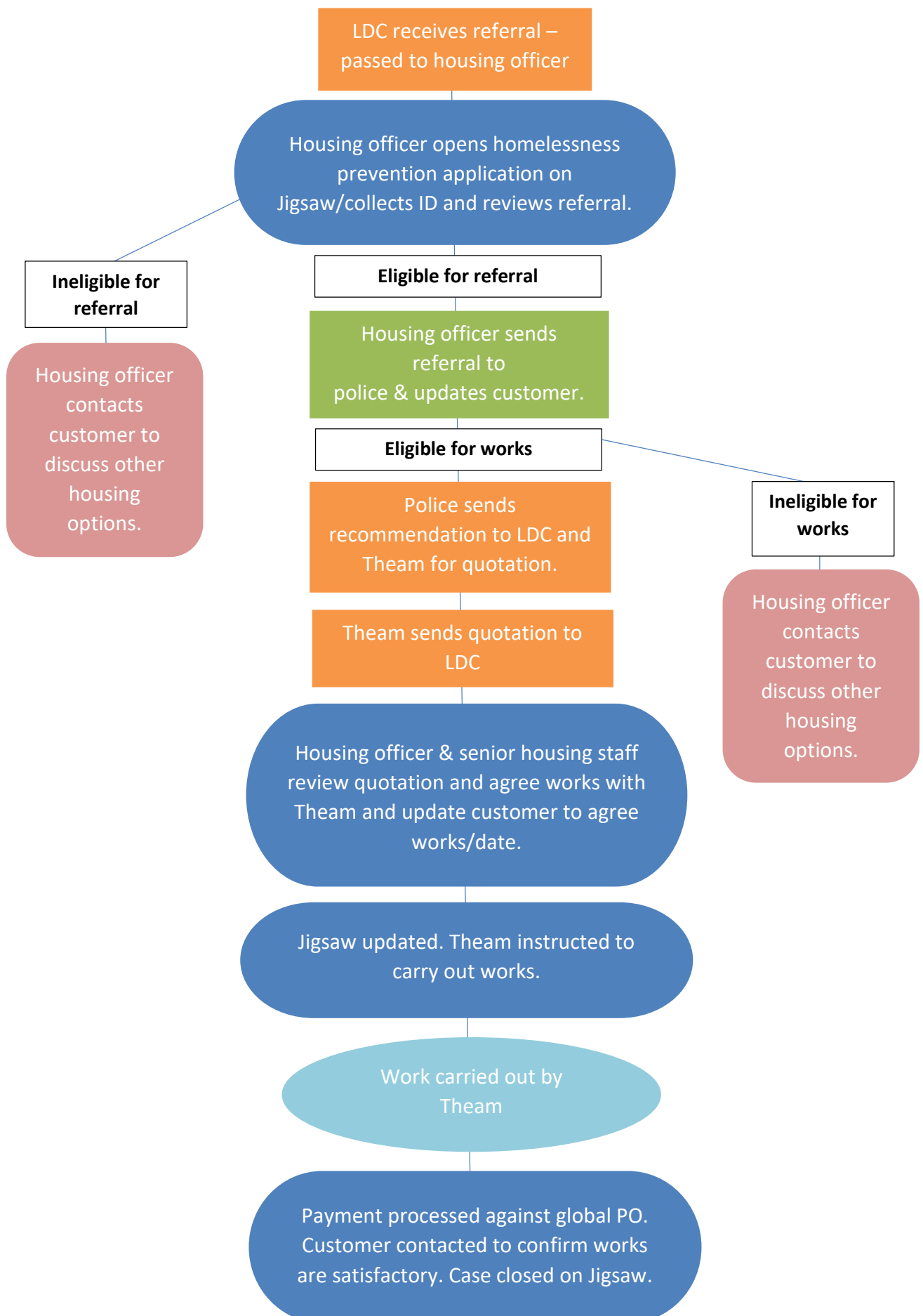
The protocol is reviewed on an annual basis by the council's housing and homelessness manager in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Housing & Local Plan.

Any questions email housingoptions@lichfielddc.gov.uk

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Appendix 1 Safer home scheme procedure

Flow chart procedure



Detailed procedure

- When the housing team receives a referral for the safer home scheme, it will be passed to a housing officer to assist the household as part of a homelessness application.
- A homeless prevention application will be opened on Jigsaw a range of evidence will be required to support the application, including ID and tenancy agreements etc.
- The housing officer will review the application form and requests further detail as required.
 - The initial assessment will consider the applicant's circumstances and whether the safer home scheme will improve their situation. This will include considering whether the applicant in a relationship with the perpetrator, whether the perpetrator is residing/has legal access to the property, and whether the applicant is already in the process of moving, etc. Each case is assessed on a case-by-case basis.
 - If the applicant is not suitable for the safer home scheme the housing officer will notify the customer, and the housing team will continue to support the applicant through their homelessness application, if appropriate or write to the customer to let them know they are not considered threatened with homelessness.
 - Eligible referrals will be sent to the architectural liaison officer (designing out crime officer) duncan.fisher@staffordshire.police.uk
 - All details will be put on the safer home scheme spreadsheet for monitoring purposes.
- The housing officer will liaise with the architectural liaison officer (designing out crime officer) and the customer to arrange an appointment for a property assessment.
- The architectural liaison officer (designing out crime officer) will send the recommendations to the appointed contractor (Theam) and the housing officer. If not eligible for works, the police will notify the housing officer, who will then liaise with the customer to look at alternative housing options.
- The appointed contractor (Theam) will send a quote to the housing officer.
- Once received the quote will be considered and signed off by a senior member of the housing team.
- The housing officer will inform Theam to carry out the works required and update the customer.
- All documentation will be uploaded to the household case on Jigsaw by the housing officer and the spreadsheet will be updated.
- The housing team approve each invoice for payment when the work has been completed, against a global purchase order.
- The housing officer will keep the customer updated throughout and make final contact with the customer to end the homeless case as a prevention, ensuring the household has what they need in place, and signpost/provide other support services if required.